



2015-2016

#MySmileMattersSM

National Engagement Plan



An Initiative of America's ToothFairy

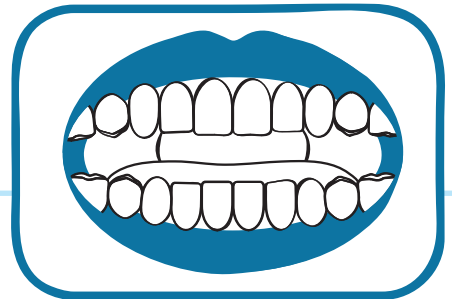


#MySmileMatters National Youth Engagement

America's ToothFairy invites all youth and youth-serving organizations to engage with our **#MySmileMatters** Youth Movement. The movement starts on social media and includes many activities youth can lead. This plan gives you a place to start with pre-designed social media messaging, friend and fundraising events, as well as opportunities for youth to engage in teaching oral health literacy. We also invite your creativity to promote oral health literacy across America.

Step 1

Get A ToothFairy 101 Community Education Kit® TODAY! If your youth group/classroom/club wants a ToothFairy 101 Community Education Kit (valued at \$100), please complete the application found [here \(http://bit.ly/1KDqePC\)](http://bit.ly/1KDqePC). Before receiving your Kit, you will be asked to complete the criteria checklist and agree to collecting pre- and post-test data to be sent back to America's ToothFairy no less than 4 times per year.



Step 2

Follow **#MySmileMatter** on social media. Using your Twitter or Instagram accounts, engage with us to promote positive oral health behaviors for children, youth and even your adult allies.



Step 2

Hashtags*

#MySmileMatters

#childrensoralhealth

#oralhealth

#toothfriendlyfoods

#toothfriendly

#smile

#fluoride

#water

#DrinkoftheToothFairy (for water only)

#GotWings (particularly if you're doing something with ToothFairy wings)

*others can be used



Step 2

Weekly Schema:

#MotivationMonday: Post about staying motivated to keep up your positive oral health behaviors all week

#ToothyTuesday: Post pictures of teeth, your smile, a friend's smile, your dog's smile, a shark, your house keys, comb, zippers

#WaterWednesday: Post pictures of water, you drinking water, a sports team drinking water and hashtag it **#DrinkoftheToothFairy** **#water**

#ThoughtfulThursday: Post pictures of how **#oralhealth** connects to **#overallhealth**

#FunFriday: Post pictures of how you are making oral health literacy fun or of you having fun and make sure to hashtag it **#MySmileMatters**

Step 3

Register to Lead a Smile Drive:

A youth group may choose to host a Smile Drive at any time. You will need to register the Smile Drive with America's ToothFairy and we will provide you with support materials. You will also be asked where you will be donating the product, and the site is of your choosing unless you would rather ship the products to us for distribution. National Smile Drive efforts are focused in February, but Smile Drives can happen at any time. (See page 5 for Smile Drive details and promotions.)



Step 4

Ongoing/Year-Round Engagement:

America's ToothFairy encourages youth groups to adopt this comprehensive plan to address oral health literacy in their school/community. Included in this plan are ideas for you to use and we are open to you creating your own activities focusing on making oral health fun.





Year-Round Engagement Activities

Back-to-School



August - September

Begin posting to all social media accounts (picture ideas are offered, but others are acceptable). Focus social media engagement on starting off the school year "right" by learning how to protect your teeth and gums for a great smile all year long. Sample social media language:

1. "**#MySmileMatters** Because..." (A picture of you and your friends smiling with **#MySmileMatters** Handout)
2. "What's in your backpack?" (A picture of you with your backpack & a toothbrush & toothpaste)
3. "Healthy Teeth = Good Sleep" (A picture of you or someone in your family sleeping)
4. "Water is the **#DrinkoftheToothFairy!**" (A picture of you being active & drinking water)
5. "Wear your mouthguard when playing sports!" (A picture of your school's sports team wearing mouthguards)

Fundraising Idea:

1. Sell concessions at a local sporting event with proceeds going to America's ToothFairy.
2. Wash-N-Wings: Host a car wash or a dog wash and wear your ToothFairy wings with proceeds going to America's ToothFairy.

Halloween

October

Begin posting to social media accounts (picture ideas are offered, but others are acceptable). Focus social media messaging on brushing your teeth after eating sweets. Sample social media language:

1. "**#MySmileMatters** even at Halloween! Make sure your mouth isn't scary! Brush after you eat your Halloween treats!" (A picture of candy or other sticky food/treat and a toothbrush)
2. "Make sure you include **#toothfriendlyfoods** in your lunch today! (A picture of you with fruit/vegetables)
3. "Trick-or-Treat! I'm dressing up as the ToothFairy for Halloween! **#MySmileMatters**" (A picture of you and your friends dressed up as ToothFairies for Halloween)
4. "Be safe on Halloween and don't forget to brush your teeth tonight!" (A picture of your candy stash with a toothbrush)

Fundraising Idea:

Ask people to donate what they would spend on candy for trick-or-treaters preventing tooth decay with proceeds going to America's ToothFairy.



Holidays

December

Social media engagement should focus on being “happy” and celebrating with family and friends and showing your healthy smile.



1. “**#MySmileMatters** during the holidays. I love this time of year! How do you celebrate with your family and friends?” (A picture of you with a parent or sibling or friend and holiday decorations)
2. “Tell me again why your smile matters this holiday season.” (A picture of you with the “**#MySmileMatters** Because....” Handout)
3. “Sharing holiday **#smiles!**” (A picture of you with presents or wrapping paper or a holiday tree or holiday party)

Fundraising Idea:

1. Donate the proceeds from your Christmas Dance at school to America’s ToothFairy.
2. Host a holiday Dance-a-Thon and charge a small admission fee with proceeds going to America’s ToothFairy.

Smile Drive

January - February

January: Smile Drive Registration (February 2016): by November 30, 2015. Register your Smile Drive by going to [here \(http://bit.ly/1KDqePC\)](http://bit.ly/1KDqePC).

- Recruit a site to hold your Smile Drive. Common locations are a dental office, a parents’ office building, the school lobby, and even a local drug store (like CVS, Rite-Aid or Wal-Mart). Clearly identify where products should be dropped off by individuals wanting to donate.
- Get your local media involved. Write a press release. Promote it in your student newspaper.
- Have a contest between all your school clubs to see who can collect the most. Make this fun, while almost increasing aware around the fact that many children are without the simple, but necessary tool of a toothbrush.
- Social Media in January should focus on preparing for the Smile Drive. February is National Children’s Dental Health Month and America’s ToothFairy’s sponsorship of the Smile Drive to collect oral health products for distribution to underserved children and youth.
- Create a Vine/YouTube video encouraging your comm your Smile Drive(s) will be held and challenge people (like the Ice Bucket Challenge) to donate oral health products.
- Pictures: Take LOTS of them and post them on social media accounts as often as possible.

February: Use Social media to advertise your Smile Drive (see above).

- Social Media should focus on the need for oral health products and drop-off locations.
- Tell the story of how valuable a toothbrush is in preventing tooth decay. Talk about **#savingsmiles** and how having a beautiful smile increases self-esteem and leads to success in life.



Year-Round Engagement Activities



Spring: Beautiful Smiles are Blossoming

March - May

Social Media: Focus on smiles being everywhere now that the weather is improving, the sun is shining and toothbrushes are being distributed, because of your Smile Drive efforts.

- Make sure to take pictures of products collected during the Smile Drive and efforts to distribute them. Get photo releases if you are in a community-based situation (i.e., a group home, homeless shelter, etc., if necessary). Hashtags: **#SmileDrive #MySmileMatters #oralhealth**
- Plant a **#ToothFriendly Garden** at school or in the community. Check with a local urban farm organization or local feeding program to see if they have a city farm you can work in. Take this time to connect oral health literacy to toothfriendly nutrition. While many organizations across the Nation are focused on hunger and healthy food access, we know that if a child cannot chew his/her food, he/she still has a hunger issue.
- Volunteer with a local "Backpack Buddies" program in your community (Check the local soup kitchen, food pantry, etc. for connections). If you have toothbrushes remaining from the Smile Drive, this is a good way to get them to a child in need.

End-of-Year Project

May: Tell Your Story of Making Oral Health Literacy Fun for Everyone

In a 5-minute video, tell the story of your oral health literacy efforts in your school/community. In the video, attempt to capture all of the events you held and the individuals you impacted.

Place emphasis on fun and the connection of oral health to overall health for children and youth.

***Make sure to get signed photo releases from any youth under 18 featured in your video and email them to Youth@ncohf.org.**





Summer

June - July

Summer Meal Program Engagement: Summer, while fun for most children and youth, can be a rather difficult time for youth in need. School is sometimes the only place a child receives a healthy, dependable meal. When Summer comes, meals become sporadic or simply what is available at home.

Summer Meal Programs are managed through the US Department of Agriculture on a national level, but by many organizations working to meet the needs of underserved populations in your community. Identify where children and youth in your community can receive summer meals and offer to host learning opportunities on the importance of oral health. Emphasis how healthy eating leads to healthy teeth and gums.

Back-to-School Smile Drive: Starting off the school year with healthy oral health habits can make for a year packed with achievements. Starting in July, lead a local Smile Drive in your community to collect oral health products for youth in need. Find a backpack stuffing program to place your products with for distribution or work with a local school to identify a sound method for ensuring your product collection is distributed to children who need it most. Make sure you register your Smile Drive with America's ToothFairy, so we can recognize you for your efforts. Go [here \(http://bit.ly/1KDqePC\)](http://bit.ly/1KDqePC) to register your Summer Smile Drive by June 15, 2016.





Ways to Raise Awareness

Find Something “Toothy”: Teeth are everywhere. Show us your favorite grins or other things that “have teeth”, such as your pet, a formation in the clouds, the zipper on your jacket, your favorite cartoon character, or something made to look like teeth. Take a picture. Post it on social media with the hashtag: **#MySmileMatters**.

The Drink of the ToothFairy: Promote water as your drink of choice. Take a picture of a water source, water bottle, glass of water or an awesome fountain with the hashtag **#GotWings** and/or **#DrinkoftheToothFairy**.

Wear Your Wings: Host a Wear Your Wings Day/Dance/Event. You and your friends can create your own ToothFairy wings and showcase them on a day at school, during a sporting event or a school dance. Get your principal, teachers and coaches involved. Have a contest to see who has the best ToothFairy wings. Take pictures. Post them on social media with the hashtag: **#MySmileMatters**.

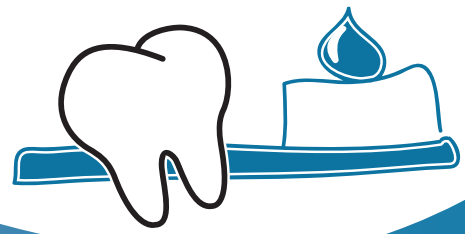
ToothFriendly Foods Demonstration: Conduct a demonstration in your school cafeteria or other location to demonstrate the difference between toothfriendly and non-toothfriendly foods. Take pictures. Post them on social media with the hashtag: **#MySmileMatters**.

Make a “Toothy” Vine: Using the Vine app, make a short “toothy” Vine and post to Instagram at **@americastoothfairy** with the hashtag: **#MySmileMatters**.

Events for Fundraising

Penny Wars: Find a way to make teams for this one! Set large jars or other locked containers in common areas and have teams compete for a prize! Pennies count as 1 point, silver change and dollars count as negative points. The object is to collect pennies for your own team, while putting silver change into other teams’ jars with the coins and dollars going to America’s ToothFairy.

Auction Off the Principal/Football Coach/Basketball Coach/Club Advisor: Encourage your friends at school to either make a donation or donate an oral healthcare product (toothbrush, toothpaste, floss or rinse). For each monetary or product donation, his or her name is entered one time for a drawing of lunch with the (insert person being auctioned) and a friend. Multiple donations allow multiple entries and more chances to win!



Advocating for Children's Oral Health

Youth empowerment models suggest young people should engage in identifying and solving problems they face. Instead of doing for or to them, adults can help youth learn the intricacies of public health problems providing them the opportunity to lend their voice to advocate and solve those problems.

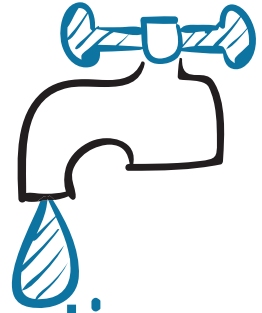
The following list provides basic information on topics within children's oral health deserving advocacy efforts led by youth. These issues remain at the top of the list of reasons why children's oral health continues to operate at a low level in the national conversation around children's oral health. Young people can raise the conversation by learning, teaching and reaching out into their school, community and State to change the conditions children are experiencing.

Oral Health Disparities

A disparity is defined as a significant difference in the health status between different populations. It is well documented that children living in poverty, in low-wealth families, and in poorer neighborhoods experience significant disparities in many areas, including oral health. All of the issues listed in this section tend to be even more difficult and pervasive for youth living in or near poverty. Think about how you can help create a positive living and learning environment for all children in your community as you seek to advocate for issues related to oral health.

Take Action to Address Oral Health Disparities: Do your homework on oral health disparities and engage in the activities below to raise awareness with stakeholders:

- Use social media to share articles, facts and cases of disparities in children's oral health.
- Work with a local dental clinic/dentist office to create a children's oral health awareness advocacy event/day.
- Partner with a local organization that serves low-wealth families to incorporate oral health information and resources into their efforts;
- Host a session/booth at a local health fair focusing on children's oral health.
- Visit your local council, board of commissioners, state legislators and other leaders to share information on oral health disparities.
- Document your efforts to raise the conversation on oral health disparities for children (i.e., create a video, briefing, etc.).



Community Water Fluoridation

Fluoride prevents tooth decay. While we often think fluoride is in all water, the truth is it is not. Research through the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's website where and if the water in your community is fluoridated. If not, you can become an advocate to add a naturally-occurring substance, fluoride, that safely reduces tooth decay in children by as much as 40% and costs less than \$1 per person per year.

Take Action to Address Water Fluoridation: Do your homework on water fluoridation in your community. Once you know the facts, engage your community and leaders to ensure all children have access to clean, fluoridated water. Use the following tactics to spread this message:

- Use social media to share articles, facts and cases on the benefits of water fluoridation.
- Write a letter to the editor with a local dentist supporting water fluoridation.
- Visit your local council, board of commissioners, state legislators and other leaders to share information on oral health disparities.
- Document your efforts to raise the conversation on water fluoridation in your community (i.e., create a video, briefing, etc.).

Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA)

There is a significant shortage of health professionals in many places within the US. If you live in a more urban area, you may not realize this. There are locations within the US where there is not a dentist, or even a doctor, for many, many miles. Additionally, the HPSA seem to be more pervasive in low-wealth areas where families may depend on Medicaid or free clinics for healthcare, including oral healthcare. America's ToothFairy is committed to growing the number of young people who self-identify as wanting to explore career options in the dental field. We support HOSA: Future Health Professionals by encouraging students in HOSA chapters to explore and consider a career in the dental field.

Take Action to Address HPSA: Research to see if there is a designated HPSA in or near your community. Go to <http://hpsafind.hrsa.gov/HPSASearch.aspx> to locate HPSA. Once you determine the facts, use the following tactics to address this issue:

- Create a method for helping low-wealth families with children find and access oral healthcare (i.e., create a resource guide, use social media to promote where free safety net dental clinics are located, etc.).
- Join or start a HOSA chapter in your middle or high school (Go to www.hosa.org for more information).
- Ask a dentist or dental hygienist to mentor you as you begin to think about your future career. See if you can volunteer to help in your dentist's office to gain career exposure.
- Engage with your school's nurse to see if oral health is part of what is offered in your school/ school district.

Making Water the Drink of Choice



Water is the best option when it comes to oral health. Many schools and youth-serving organizations have removed sugar-sweetened beverages from vending machines, but there is still work to be done. Additionally, there is research to show that US youth are underhydrated. Water is the best way to regain what is lost during sports practice, outdoor play and should be consumed throughout the day while at home, school or in your community. Choosing water, though, is not always easy. Many schools do not have drinking fountains providing much needed free, clean water for students. Have you looked at your school or organization's drinking fountain lately? Is it clean, operational and in a high-traffic location?

Take Action to Ensure Clean Drinking Water Access: Do your homework on the benefits of drinking water over sugar-sweetened beverages. Once you have gathered the facts, use the following tactics to address access to clean drinking water in your school/community:

- If sugar-sweetened beverages are in vending machines in child-friendly locations, advocate having them replaced with water.
- Do a survey of drinking fountains in your school, community center or other public location frequented by children and youth. Document using pictures and video what you see related to the fountain, if it is used, who uses it and why it might not be used.
- Advocate having only water sold at your school/community sporting events.
- Research water safety and quality in your community and determine if there are issues where you can become the advocate for making changes.

Helpful Resources

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

<http://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/>

Campaign for Dental Health:

<http://ilikemyteeth.org/>

National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research:

<http://nidcr.nih.gov/oralhealth/>

Health Resources and Services Administration:

<http://www.hrsa.gov/publichealth/clinical/oralhealth/>

Children's Dental Health Project:

www.cdhp.org

Healthy People 2020:

<http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/oral-health>





If you are using the #MySmileMatters National Youth Engagement Plan, we want to hear from you, and we want to hear from you often. Please register your group [here](http://bit.ly/1Nc9HIY) (<http://bit.ly/1Nc9HIY>) with us at to let us know you are using the plan to work oral health literacy efforts into your school or community.

For technical assistance, please contact us at America's ToothFairy.

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www.AmericasToothFairy.org



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MySmileMattersYouthMovement

#MySmileMattersSM because...

